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ONEIDA MOUNTAINEER

Education for Time and Eternity

A bi-monthly newsletter of Oneida Baptist Institute

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Oneida Baptist Institute

A place of **HOPE**



The materials for the 18th annual Father's Day Offering for Oneida were packed and labeled by Illinois volunteers in April and mailed to Kentucky Baptist Churches (and a few out-of-state churches) in May. This year's brochure and poster feature some of our best and brightest of the Class of 2014.

We chose the theme, "A place of HOPE," because teenagers from across Kentucky, the United States and around the world continue to find hope at Oneida:

- to succeed
- to start over
- to discover new interests
- to make better friends
- to get the help they need in class

Most importantly, every teenager who comes to our campus is presented with the eternal hope found in the Gospel of Christ Jesus.

Our hope and prayer for the Father's Day Offering is that churches would receive and open their boxes and make the information about OBI available to congregations and potential students. It is because of the support and prayers of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and Christians from all over the United States that young people continue to find hope at Oneida.



Meet some of our 2014 graduates

Samuel finished strong at OBI



When God calls your parents to Oneida, the children come too, even if it's their senior year. Samuel's dad was recovering from a serious injury last summer when he got the call from OBI's new president asking if he would serve as the high school principal. Samuel recalled, "Right after dad got back from

the hospital, he called us into the living room and told us that the Lord laid it on his heart to go back to Oneida."

Samuel's parents had worked at OBI for several years before he and his younger brother, Simon, were born. Samuel was two years old when the family moved to eastern Kentucky. Growing up, Samuel heard a lot about Oneida. He said, "Mom and Dad talked about it. They had a lot of stories." He remembers visiting the campus when he was about eight years old for his dad's induction into OBI's Athletic Hall of Fame at the annual Homecoming.

Samuel's reaction to the news that they were moving to Oneida was a question: "When are we going?" He was told "as soon as possible," and he shared the news with some of his friends that day. "I have a good group of friends. We're really close. Some of my friends helped us move," he said.

Samuel transferred from a public school with 1200 kids to OBI with about 300. He observed, "There's not as much 'drama' here. You can hang out with everybody throughout the day. I like the smaller school atmosphere."

A good student, Samuel continued to make top grades at Oneida. He believes the smaller classes at OBI enabled him to gain more knowledge. "The education here is better," he said. He had taken AP classes at his old school but said his AP government class at OBI was

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his favorite. "This is probably the best class I've taken. It's getting me ready for an actual college class."

Samuel brought his experience and talent in sports to Oneida's soccer and basketball teams this year. It was a sacrifice for Samuel to leave his old teammates. "We grew very close to each other. We'd been playing together since third grade. It was very hard," he said.

Because of OBI's no-cut policy, our teams include athletes at all levels of experience. This was challenging for Samuel who said, "I'm a competitor, it's in my blood." Thinking of playing in college, Samuel felt that he benefited from playing with people he did not know. "It was a good experience for someone like me. It's good they have the no-cut policy at Oneida, because it's more about the development of the kids and letting them be a part of something and not just about the wins." Samuel smiled and added, "But I'm a competitor, so of course I want to win." He was named to the All Region Team in soccer last fall.

Samuel shared his athletic ability in another way by helping to coach the middle school basketball team this year. "I enjoyed it. It was fun. The middle schoolers are funny!"

Growing up in church where his dad was usually the pastor, Samuel is very familiar with scripture. Attending daily chapel as part of his school day was a new experience. He said, "It's good to get everybody back on track, especially in the first nine weeks of school. I enjoyed it. You can always use more Jesus in your life."

Despite the sacrifices and stress of a move at the start of his senior year, Samuel said, "I wish I would have come to OBI earlier. I really enjoy OBI." He is considering studying pre-law in college and also hopes to play basketball for his college team. □

OBI gave Karen the chance to shine



Karen came to Oneida as a sophomore from Nigeria for a better education and the chance to study nursing in an American university. Her cousin had enrolled at OBI one year earlier. Karen said, "I decided to come to OBI so I could have a fresh start and to be able to access more opportunities which God provides. I wanted a change. God provided for my family and made a way for me."

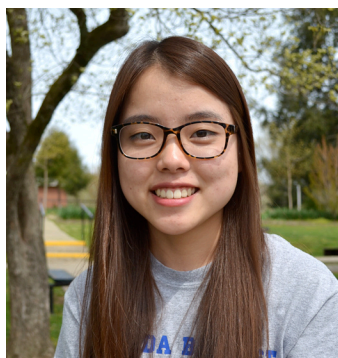
An honor roll student, Karen noted, "I have learned how to use my [imagination], especially because of my AP English classes." Daily chapel was a bright point in Karen's school day. "I love the worship. When you see other people deep in worship, it motivates you to worship God," she said.

Karen enjoyed her after-school job in the campus grill and also worked in the dorm as a hall monitor. She got involved in sports as a manager of volleyball and basketball. She also played one season of volleyball and two seasons of tennis. She received the Most Improved award in tennis last year. In sports, Karen said, "I've learned how to compete with confidence and to face my shyness."

Karen was honored to be the recipient of OBI's student-voted award, the Brad Dorough Friendship award, a full-tuition scholarship provided by the family of a former OBI student who passed away in 1989.

This year, Karen served the student body as president of the Student Council and helped to organize campus-wide activities like the International Bazaar and the Spring Fling. Reflecting on the last three years, Karen said, "I had the opportunity to shine. ... The best part about OBI is the opportunities." □

Positive feedback gave Inae confidence



Originally from South Korea, Inae came to Oneida from China, where her parents are serving as missionaries. They learned about OBI from their pastor whose daughter was a student here. Inae said, "When I was in China, I really wanted to study English and American culture. I was looking for a better education."

When she enrolled as a sophomore, she was not sure she would like having a required after-school job. Once she learned that the pep band, like sports, counts as a job she was happy. As a musician, she noted, "I could keep

close with music in pep band." Inae also stayed involved in music by enrolling in piano and guitar classes. She shared her musical talent by singing or playing an instrument for special music in chapel, in the Talent Show and as entertainment during the Yearbook Queen pageant.

In addition to the pep band, Inae participated in volleyball and tennis and worked in the kitchen and dormitory. She received an Outstanding Worker award, a Highest GPA award in volleyball and an athletic letter in tennis.

For Inae, being a student in America boosted her confidence because she received positive feedback for her academic success. "I am considered smart here, but if I were in Korea or China people would not say this." Inae received an Outstanding Scholar award in precalculus and placed third in a state-level creative writing contest last year.

Inae plans to attend college in Kentucky to study music and psychology. □

Would you like to contact us?

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OBI was an affordable option for Paul



From South Korea, Paul enrolled at OBI as a junior in order to have the opportunity to go to college. He said, "If I graduated at my old school, it was really tough for me to go to college there." His family chose OBI because it was affordable. One of Paul's cousins had graduated from OBI in 2012. "He played sports here and said it was really good, especially for him because it prepared him for college," Paul said.

Having a required after-school job at OBI helped Paul to explore his interests. He played the tuba in the pep band, managed the tennis team and played one season each of soccer and tennis. He received the 100% Award in soccer and went to state in tennis.

Paul completed the field placement program his senior year. Based on his goal of working in television, he was assigned to work as an assistant audio/visual technician in the chapel. Paul noted, "In the beginning,

there were some boring things, but as time passed, Mr. C. allowed me to try some stuff like making backgrounds for the slides. That got me really interested and really involved." Even though the labor of putting away sound equipment was tedious, Paul said, "You feel proud when you hear the music performance."

Paul said his parents are the first in their family line to become Christians. He was raised attending church but has not yet accepted Christ. "When I got older, I had doubts. Coming to OBI helped me, because I saw different people of faith and how they acted and showed Christian characteristics. When I was down, chapel reminded me that God is talking to me in different ways," he said. □

Alexis found a safe haven and 'real' friends



Alexis is from western Kentucky and has attended OBI at the recommendation of a family counselor since January 2012. Alexis needed a change. She had a difficult home life and was surrounded by bad influences in her peer group. She said, "I was excited to try something new and to be by myself."

OBI became a lifeline for Alexis when her grandparents' home burned two years ago. Alexis, her mother and sister had been forced to move in with her grandparents shortly before the fire. "We all had to start over," she said.

At OBI, Alexis saw improvement in her grades and made the honor roll her first year. "I was more focused in school than before," she said. After school, she enjoyed staying busy. Having played volleyball since the seventh grade, she joined the OBI team her junior year. "Volleyball is my passion," she said. She became a team leader, earned the 110% Award and was named to the All District Team. She also received Outstanding Worker awards for her work in the campus grill and dorm.

Looking back on her time at Oneida, Alexis said she is most grateful for her OBI friends. "They're real. I've never had friends that I could trust," she said. □

Tihut learned to work



Tihut was an eighth-grader from Ethiopia when she enrolled at OBI with her older sister. When it came time to leave home, she confessed, "I had mixed feelings because I would miss my family but at the same time, I was excited to experience a new school in a different environment. Now, I've become so attached to OBI it's going to be hard to leave."

Tihut enjoyed the diversity of OBI's students and said, "Getting along with students other than my sister made my stay in the dorm much easier."

Tihut made the B honor roll her second quarter at OBI and said, "It was easier here. In Oneida, the classes are smaller; therefore, my teachers take time to help me individually."

Having a daily job was a new experience for Tihut, who received Outstanding Worker awards. "When I first heard that we had to work, I was astonished because I never had worked before. I've learned to work with all kinds of people in my different positions. It's a good way to prepare myself for future jobs," she said. Tihut worked as a clerk in the kitchen, a cook in the campus grill and as a Field Placement assistant in the sign lab.

Daily chapel at Oneida was a spiritual benefit for Tihut. "It teaches me good things. They always talk about Jesus," she smiled. She added, "I never thought I'd come this close to God. If I were anywhere else, I wouldn't be focused like this," she said.

Tihut plans to study fashion and interior design in college. □

Meet some of our 2014 graduates

Isaac prepared for his career



Isaac was 13 years old when his family moved from Indiana to central Kentucky. Two years ago, his father became a pastor at a Baptist church in a community near Oneida. His parents decided that OBI would be good for Isaac, so he enrolled as a junior

and began commuting to our campus.

OBI was a different experience from public school. Isaac said, "I liked that there were devotions before most of my classes." He also enjoyed daily chapel services, especially the presentations by Creative Ministries.

Though he grew up being taught the word of God at home, Isaac benefited from Godly instruction at Oneida in chapel and in the classroom. He explained, "Always when you approach God's word, there are new things to learn."

A good student, Isaac took advantage of the advanced placement classes offered at OBI. Isaac's previous experience with Academic Team was valuable to OBI's newly-started team this year, and he was named team captain.

Isaac enjoyed working in the computer lab three periods a day as part of the Field Placement program this year. He gained 900 hours of work experience and computer repair skills, and received a certificate from the Kentucky Department of Education. Isaac said, "I learned a lot about what I think I want to do as a career. It was better than a classroom setting, because I actually got to work on the computers." □

Just a reminder...

OBI Homecoming: June 28

Christie discovered her potential



Christie is from New York and enrolled at OBI as a sophomore. Several of her cousins already attended and Christie said, "I had wanted to try boarding school, and when I heard about OBI, it made me want to come here! I heard that it's safer, and you connect with people more. I heard that the sports teams

are like family. I couldn't do sports at home, because my school was so far away."

At OBI, Christie became a manager for the softball, volleyball, swimming and cheerleading teams. She earned the Best Teammate and the Highest GPA awards as a player in softball. She received the Most Improved Server award in volleyball.

Christie learned more about the Bible at OBI. "Chapel here was like a Sunday School class to me. It helps you to think about what you need to improve in your life. It gives you insight into what you need to do. I liked the guest speakers and the bands, too," she said.

Christie became more serious about preparing for college. "At first, I didn't care about my grades. I never failed, but I would pass with a C. I actually started trying, and I made the A honor roll my junior year. I was so happy!" she said. Her goal is to become an anesthesiologist. □



Great job, OBI Drama! The spring play was performed April 3-5 and again on April 11 for over 250 children from nearby public elementary schools.

The five seniors in the cast were honored after their final curtain call (pictured left to right): **Savannah Fallis** from Corbin, Kentucky, **Jacob Bortell** and **Taylor Cochran**, both from Oneida, **Daniel Li** from China and **Jessie Nyarko** from Ghana.

You can read more about these and other members of the Class of 2014 in the June 10th issue of the *Western Recorder*.